

# SAFESTAT REPORT

*Nevada Highway Patrol*

Major Richard Varner

## Overview

This report encompasses the calendar year 2004 for the Northern Command.

The Northern Command handled a total of 4414 crashes for the year. There were a total of 2,967 property damage crashes, 1,395 injury crashes and 52 fatal crashes. These numbers show an overall increase in the crash rate in Northern Command of 6.4%. Property crashes climbed 4.9%, injury crashes increased 9.5% and fatal crashes increased 10.6%. The portion of these the total crashes that involved intoxicated drivers was 2.3% or 168 occurrences. The Northern Command showed a very sharp rise in the number of crashes that involved commercial vehicles. This sharp rise can be attributed to the improvement in reporting. The statistics now accurately capture all the types of commercial vehicles.

The Northern Command made a total of 839 arrests for Driving Under the Influence. These arrests were made not as a result of a vehicular collision. DUI arrests as a result of a crash accounted for 168 arrests. This gives an overall total for DUI arrests of 1007. There were a total of 4198 additional arrest charges made over and above the DUI arrests. The total number of people arrested in the Northern Command was 2027 or a drop of 19.6% compared to last year. Total traffic violations charged dropped by 14.9% this year as compared to last year.

The Northern Command continues to operate at a reduced manpower level when compared to prior years, reduced from an allocation of 93 traffic troopers to only 76 traffic troopers. The command was also impacted by 5 troopers that were called upon for active full time military duty. This has affected the overall statistics as the command has been forced to handle more crash investigations with fewer officers. This shortage has affected the amount of proactive work that the officers can do thereby reducing the amount of proactive enforcement. This reduction in proactive enforcement then relates to an increase in traffic collisions due to the reduced enforcement.

The Northern Command worked through numerous difficulties with the move to the 800 MHz radio system. These issues were dealt with professionally by the command and personnel as they were identified. The radio system has developed into a good tool for the man and women of the Command.

The Northern Command had a very busy election year. There were multiple visits to this area by both Presidential candidates, both the Vice-Presidential candidates and all of the first ladies. This put an additional strain on our already reduced manpower but all of the special operations were accomplished without incident.

The Northern Command command staff is pleased with the performance of the men and women of the Northern Command. They have accomplished much with the reduced staffing this year.

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## CRASH ANALYSIS AND OVERVIEW

	Calendar Year 2004		Calendar Year 2003	% Change
Total Crashes	4414		4148	6.4
Property Crashes [including commercial vehicles]	2967		2828	4.9
Injury Crashes [including commercial vehicles]	1395		1274	9.5
Fatal Crashes [including commercial vehicles]	52		47	13.0
DUI Crashes [DUI charged]	168		174	-8.7
Total persons killed in fatal crashes	61		50	22.0
Total drivers killed without seatbelts	17		15	13.3
Total passengers killed without seatbelts	8		5	60.0
Total drivers killed with seatbelts	22		17	29.4
Total passengers killed with seatbelts	9		6	50.0
Total persons killed - seatbelts not applicable	5		7	-28.6
Total number of commercial vehicle crashes	177		97	82.5
Property crashes involving commercial vehicle	124		68	82.4
Injury crashes involving commercial vehicle	51		26	96.2
Fatal crashes involving commercial vehicle	2		3	-33.3

Percentage of fatal crashes to total crashes 1.2%

Percentage of DUI crashes to total crashes 3.8%

Percentage of persons killed *without* seatbelts to total persons killed 41.0%

Percentage of commercial vehicle crashes to total crashes 4.0%

- Total crashes increased by 6.4%
  - Property damage crashes increased by 4.9%.
  - Injury crashes increased by 9.5%.
  - Fatal crashes increased by 5 occurrences or 13.0%.
  - Alcohol related crashes decreased by 6 or 8.7%.
- Commercial vehicle involved crashes increased over last year.
  - Property crashes increased by 82.4%.
  - Injury crashes increased by 96.2%.
  - There were 2 commercial vehicle fatal crashes this year an increase of 33.3%.
  - **Note:** The sharp increase in commercial vehicle crashes is largely attributed to the improved reporting of crashes involving the full spectrum of commercial vehicles.

## FIELD ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY

[Analysis and review of current reporting period, versus same period in previous fiscal year, versus previous reporting period]

	Calendar Year 2004		Calendar Year 2003	% Change
DUI arrests from crashes **	168		184	-8.7
DUI arrests <i>prior</i> to crashes **	839		1386	-39.5
Other Arrests	4198		6132	-31.5
Total persons arrested (DUI included) **	2027		2522	-19.6
Speed violations	23283		23879	-2.5
Hazardous moving violations	8383		10511	-20.2
Occupant restraint violations *	4339		5069	-14.4
Total violations [above violations included]	57179		67171	-14.9
<b>Commercial Enforcement</b>				
Hazardous moving violations - citations/arrests	140		142	-1.4
Other traffic violations - citations/arrests	261		504	-48.2
Total safety inspections [level 1, 2, 3, 4 & 6]	6984		5556	25.7
Terminal inspections [level 5] CR only	0		0	0
Total safety violations -- citation	2770		3868	-28.4
Total safety violations -- repair order	14541		7980	82.2
Total vehicles placed "Out of Service"	876		747	17.3
Total drivers placed "Out of Service"	327		234	39.7
Total school buses inspected	1199		1651	-27.4
Total school buses placed "Out of Service"	279		238	17.2
Total trucks weighed	3113		3684	-15.5
Total overweight citations	256		363	-29.5
Total dyed fuel inspections	4615		4556	1.3
Total dyed fuel citations	28		23	21.7

\* Seat belt and child restraint

\*\* Commercial Enforcement Activity Included

- Overall enforcement activity decreased by 14.09%.
  - DUI involved crashes decreased by 8.7%.
  - There was a decrease in DUI arrests prior to crashes of 39.5%.
  - There was a decrease in total persons arrested of 19.6%.
  - There was a decrease in speed violations cited of 2.5%.
  - Hazardous moving violation cited decreased by 20.2%
  - Occupant restraint violations cited increased 14.4%.
- Total safety inspections conducted by Commercial Enforcement increased by 25.7%
  - Total safety violation citations decreased by 28.4%
  - Total safety violation repair orders increased by 82.2%
  - Total vehicles placed out of service increased by 17.3%

## **TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT**

### ***Carson/Tahoe/Minden District***

- The Carson/Tahoe/Minden District continued to change in both actual demographic status and personnel status. The district leveled off to the allocated staffing of 16 troopers and 3 sergeants, however, in reality only 13.5 troopers and 2 sergeants actually worked the road during 2004. When combined with the reallocation of manpower that started in 2002, the result is 2 vacant positions that are scheduled to be filled by mid 2005.
- A major fire affected the Carson City area this year. The Waterfall Fire began in the early morning hours of July 14. The fire impacted all personnel assigned to the area in one-way or another. Fellow employees' homes were threatened and many hours were devoted to traffic control, evacuation assistance and command center duties. The fire directly affected the district until the afternoon of July 17. The community as a whole is attempting to recover to this date, as 17 homes were lost.
- The rapid growth in Douglas County and Lyon County has dramatically altered the traffic and accident patterns. The commercial and private property expansion in northern Douglas County has resulted in a record number of crashes just south of Carson City, accounting for 24% of all crashes.
- The growth in Dayton has also resulted in an increased number of crashes on the east side of Carson during the morning and afternoon commutes to and from Carson City, accounting for 23% of all crashes.
- The construction of the I-580 bypass has resulted in an almost permanent construction zone on the north side of Carson City for 2004, accounting for 14% of all crashes. That means that 3 of our 10 beats account for 61% of all crashes. DUI crashes also increased 25%.
- Sadly fatality crashes also increased by 77.8%, with an even worse increase of 160% in persons killed. In real numbers, 8 additional people, in 7 additional crashes, died in the district when compared to last year.
- Enforcement efforts have been affected in a negative manner with the amount of time devoted to additional crashes and the loss of available manpower. DUI arrests decreased by 42%. The major reason for the drop was that the district had to cancel the early morning shift that had produced numerous DUI arrests due to the manpower shortage.
- Total violations dropped by 10.3%, however, the loss of manpower equaled 14% so the drop in citation activity is not unexpected. Last year the average trooper investigated 5.37 crashes per month, and wrote 88.81 citations. This year the average trooper investigated 8.3 crashes per month, and wrote 98.8 citations. The district's troopers put in numerous hours of overtime and effort to keep the motoring public as safe as possible.
- Unfortunately there are many areas throughout the district that now receive very little patrol due the amount of time required to be spent on only 30% of the district's beats. We will attempt to increase the level of service to those areas during low crash times.

### ***Fernley/Fallon District***

- The Fernley/Fallon District has changed in both actual demographic status and personnel status. Effectively the district worked with only 13.5 of the allocated 16 troopers during 2004. When combined with the reallocation of manpower that started in 2002, the result is 2 vacant positions that are scheduled to be filled by mid 2005.
- The rapid growth in Lyon County has dramatically altered the traffic and accident patterns. The commercial and private property expansion in Fernley and Dayton has altered the location of crashes. The district responded to the changes in traffic patterns very effectively.

- Total crashes actually decreased by 1.8% despite the fact that Lyon County was the fastest growing county in Nevada per capita.
- The only true negative is the increase in DUI crashes by 4, and the overall increase in commercial vehicle crashes by 35.4%.
- Fatality crashes also decreased by a very impressive 38.1%, with a decrease of 30.4% of persons killed. In real numbers, 7 fewer people, in 8 fewer crashes, died in the district when compared to last year.
- Enforcement efforts have been strong. Although DUI arrests decreased by 11%, overall persons arrested actually increased by 10.1%. Speeding citations dropped off by 7.2%, however, the district focused on crash causing violations. As a result hazardous moving citations increased by 14.1%. Occupant restraint violations increased by 33.4%, again due to the renewed focus of the district's supervisors and troopers. Total violations cited increased by 4.4%, despite the effective manpower loss of 10%.
- Last year the average trooper investigated 4.1 crashes per month, and wrote 84 citations. This year the average trooper investigated 4.1 crashes per month, and wrote 91 citations.
- The district's troopers put in numerous hours of overtime and effort to keep the motoring public as safe as possible.

### ***Reno Urban Traffic***

- The Northern Command Urban area investigated a total of 2,399 crashes this year as opposed to 2,385 the previous year. This is remarkable when you consider the total increase was less than 1%, while the population increase for the urban area was slightly more than 3.5%. This number exceeded the State Demographers previous estimate of a 2.6% growth rate. Nevada continues to lead the nation in population growth for the 17<sup>th</sup> straight year.
- Fatal crashes in the urban area increased by 43%, from 16 last year to 23 this year.
- DUI crashes decreased by 31%. Much of the decrease may be attributed to an increase in awareness and education.
- The urban area conducted several highly publicized and very successful DUI saturation patrols. DUI arrests from crashes also showed a decrease of 16.5%. New funding has been made available through the Nevada Office of Traffic Safety to conduct more saturation patrols through the summer.
- DUI arrests prior to crashes were also down by over 32%. The urban area will have a renewed focus on arresting impaired drivers in the coming year.
- Overall enforcement in the urban area was down from last year. Total violations were down from 35,204 last year, to 26,428 this year, which is a drop of 24.9% overall.
- Some of the decrease may be attributed to a reduction in available manpower, as well as the rolling out of the new Crash Report Form 5, which proved to be very time consuming to learn and become proficient at.
- Occupant restraint violations decreased by 37%, from 2,432 to 1,512. According to the National Traffic Safety Administration, the nationwide occupant restraint usage is at an all time high of over 80%. However, this is clearly an area that can be focused on harder in the coming year.
- Manpower was stretched thin this year by promotions, military duty and special assignments. The command is constantly working to fill any vacancy that comes up through transfers and new hires.

## **COMMERCIAL ENFORCEMENT**

- During Calendar Year 2004, Commercial Enforcement goals changed in cooperation with the Motor Carrier Safety Alliance Program (MCSAP) federal grant administration.
- The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration which funds the MCSAP grant changed its focus concerning vehicle inspections. The focus was changed from conducting check site level 1 vehicle inspections to conducting increased numbers of level 2 and level 3 inspections.
- Level 1 inspections were reduced by 61% or 1,010 inspections.
- Level 2/3 inspections were increased by 20% or 1,710 inspections with 10% of these or 720 inspections being conducted during enforcement contacts (moving violations).
- These changes took effect in October 2004 which was the beginning of the 2005 federal fiscal year. Prior to these changes taking effect in late 2004, inspection activity remained steady throughout calendar year 2004.
- Although Commercial Operations experienced as many as four vacancies during 2004, the federal fiscal year ended September 30, 2004 and all of the assigned CVSP goals were exceeded. This shows tangible proof of the work ethic of our commercial officers as they increased their efforts when they were needed.
- A key issue during Calendar Year 2004 was the training of new personnel for their inspector certifications.
- All except one of the commercial vacancies are filled, but the personnel filling these positions cannot conduct vehicle inspections. Our goal is to get all uncertified personnel trained in early 2005.
- All State and Federal goal achievements were met or exceeded during 2003.
- Northern Command Commercial Enforcement operated with reduced staffing throughout most of 2003 (68%), but still managed to stay consistent in attaining the assigned CVSP goals.
- There were several months in calendar year 2003 that the total monthly activity exceeded the total monthly goal in many categories.
- A key issue for 2003 was the portable and semi-portable scales. This was the first year that the scale re-certification responsibility was passed on to NDOT. On one occasion the portable scales were down for more than a month as compared to less than a week when this responsibility was on the NHP Commercial Operations staff.
- Although during this time the interstate weight enforcement activity remained at an acceptable level, the secondary weight enforcement activity was almost non-existent due in part to the fact the portable scales were down for an extended period of time. This issue was corrected by returning the scale certification responsibility to NHP Commercial Operations staff in 2004.
- The Northern Command Commercial Section will make a concerted effort during the coming months to increase the goal achievement in all areas. The men and women of Commercial Operation will continue to work diligently to accomplish their mission and make 2005 a positive and productive year.

## ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES	Calendar Year 2004		Calendar Year 2003	% Change
COMMUNICATION CENTER				
Radio Transmissions	957780		Na	
CAD incidents	99380		Na	
FRONT OFFICE				
Accident Reports Processed	3895		Na	
Arrest Reports Processed	1755		Na	
Incident / Officer Reports Processed	Na		Na	
COURT / WARRANT				
Warrants Received	6346		Na	
Warrants Entered	6926		Na	
Warrants Cleared	8902		Na	
Warrants Validated	4436		Na	
Extradition / Transports	286		Na	
EVIDENCE				
New Cases Submitted	333		Na	
New Items Submitted	581		Na	
Items Disposed	574		Na	

## COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

- There is no statistical comparison information available for the year of 2003, as this began in 2004.
  - There were 957,780 radio transmissions and 99,380 CAD incidents generated this year.
  - The telephone calls were not tracked this year, however with the new Exacom digital recorder this statistic should be captured during calendar year 2005.
- Areas to note are Administrative leave and Overtime. The majority of the Administrative leave was due to a Public Safety Dispatcher (PSD) IV being called to a lengthy jury duty requiring coverage for her. This accounted for 168 of the 181.5 hours.
- A large majority of overtime was generated due to vacancy coverage as well as a period where one PSD III was on extended medical leave due to injury.
- During this Calendar year the center had multiple PSD I positions vacant. During the last six months of the year the center had one shift supervisor and the center manager's position vacant.
- The hiring of a new Manager on December 20, 2004, and the new use of alternative scheduling should help to decrease these numbers.
- Currently, the center has two PSD I vacancies and one PSD IV vacancy, with ongoing recruitments for both.



## **FRONT OFFICE**

- The front office staff processed 3,895 accident reports, 1,755 Arrest Reports and handled 268 office accident reports during the year.
- Noteworthy is the amount of sick leave usage. The elevated number of hours is due to three staff members having surgery with extended recovery periods. One Administrative Assistant (AAII) was on catastrophic leave for 8 weeks, which created the necessity for overtime to cover processing citations.
- The training hours included the new AAIII attending the 1<sup>st</sup> Line Supervisory Academy, NCIC training for the four new staff members hired, their trainer's hours, and recertification.
- The front office is currently fully staffed with 5 AAII's and one AAIII. One position was filled with a transfer from the Southern Command in November. Another position formally utilized in the front office was reassigned to Court Warrants for citation processing and telephones.

## **COURT WARRANTS**

- The section received 6,346 new warrants this year and entered 6,926 warrants.
- The section entered more warrants than it received due to eliminating the backlog that existed.
- The section cleared 8,902 warrants this year, due to an increased emphasis from the staff on the local courts to purge warrants not confirmed within a 10 year period.
- DUI's are not typically purged in this process.
- A position from the front office was added to the Warrants section to process citations, assist in the clears and confirmation of warrants, and to deposit regional monies as per the Audit Team's direction.

## **AIRCRAFT**

- There is a 2000 hour manufacturer's time between overhaul (TBO) recommendation for the aircraft engine and propeller governor. Monies for this necessary maintenance are requested every four years - necessitating an approximate 500 hour per year flight time for all activities. The current engine was installed in September, 2001. The aircraft will reach its TBO in July, 2005.
- For the 12 month period just ended, the Northern Command aircraft flew a total of 584 hours. This is 18% less than the 710 hours flown in 2003.
- 83 speed enforcement missions were flown in 2004 for a total of 2928 enforcement actions. Three DUI arrests resulted from speed clocks and 72 motorist assists were spotted by the aircraft. This number does not include the 16 motorist assists accomplished during Burning Man line patrol.
- During 2003, there were 110 speed enforcement missions resulting in 3708 enforcement actions. Again, this increase over 2004 is due to the maximum utilization of the backup pilot.
- Revenues generated by the aircraft on prisoner transports and speed enforcement totaled \$440,861.00 in the 2004 calendar year. Total operating costs for the same period were \$44,873.00. \$9.82 was earned for the justice courts for every \$1.00 spent in operations.
- During 2004, our aircraft accomplished 32 in state prisoner transports and 2 out of state extraditions - one from Arizona and one from Idaho. This is significantly more than 2003's 9 transports - 255%.
- The Northern Command aircraft continued a wide variety of activities in addition to speed enforcement and prisoner transports.
- The plane has been made available to other DPS divisions for their use. An OPR investigator was flown to Medford, Oregon as part of an excessive force complaint investigation. NDI has been flown statewide to conduct polygraph examinations.
- The plane was used for three days with NDI in December to search the Peavine, Black Rock and Virginia Peak wilderness areas to search for murder suspect Gary Brown.



- We have worked with the DPS recruitment team and attended 6 air shows with them with the plane on static display. The plane, a motorcycle and the recruitment patrol car are always very well received by the public at events such as the Reno Air Races.
- New enforcement marks were added on US 50 at Leeteville Junction. Following construction completion, enforcement marks were replaced at Bellevue on US 395 and Wadsworth and Fernley in IR 80. New marks were also surveyed and painted in Elko and Wells.

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